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THE HON. LOUIS JOSEPH

ADDRESS TO THE

OF THE

CITY OF MONTREAL

GENTLEMEN—Since the conclusion of the last Session of the Provincial Parliament, several influential electors of the City of Montreal, several political and private friends, have written to me, some have visited me to solicit my acceptance of the highly honorable position of Candidate for the representation of this Metropolis of Canada. To all I have uniformly replied, in perfect sincerity and good faith, that the fatigue caused by the anxieties and by the deep moral responsibilities which belong to public life, made me wish to retire from it. I told them that I was ahungered and athirst for repose; that, after forty years of incessant strife, I thought I had a right to my discharge. Having lived to the age of sixty-five years in the midst of agitations, severe and painful as those which have so rapidly succeeded each other in Canada since 1809, I sought in the bosom of my family and in the solitude of the banks of the Ottawa, for peace and tranquillity during the few years which perhaps remain to me of my earthly pilgrimage.

In the situation which I had thus marked out for myself, I have been therefore surprised to receive an invitation on the part of more than five hundred electors, praying me to accept the candidature for the representation in Parliament of the City of Montreal. The links which enchain me—duty, love, and gratitude—to the free and independent electors of the finest, most enlightened, and most important of Canadian Cities, are strong and numerous, and they date from the period of my entrance on the Parliamentary career. To the appeal which my friends make to my proved patriotism, they add, that I cannot, in the difficult and peculiar circumstances of the moment, when so great a number of those who formerly served the people's cause, have lately deserted it, allured by the love of power, of honours, of official patronage, and intoxicated by the incense of base adulation offered to those who exercise it, and enchaind by the excessive emoluments attached to almost all the public functions—that I cannot by an ill-timed refusal, prejudice the cause of the great democratic party, which I have been always so active in forming, in rallying, in encouraging, both in good and evil fortune. They say that this refusal would be interpreted as a censure—a disavowal of the noble efforts, which are being made in Montreal and throughout the Province, for the largest possible renovation of the representation, of which the majority in the last Parliament forfeited their duty and their engagements taken at the Hustings. The Manifesto of the Committee of Reform and Progress, published at Quebec, was the professed political symbol—the wisely and moderately liberal flag displayed by every

here, by honest and moderate labour, landed proprietors and independent Democracy socially constituted. who, because they admire the remarkability of the English government, wish to copy its laws—who admire for example the Legislative Council because they admire of Lords—simply show that they have read texts; but no intelligence to interpret and to apply them to the manners, and the necessities of our country. precedents in legislation, just as Attorneys copy indictments in the Queen's Bench in so doing make nothing but These men of precedents, who believe statesmen, do not understand our situation; and they throw it into confusion by their essays at constitutional making in direct opposition and contrary to the manners, instincts and tendencies of our vigorous society, which is struggling to develop itself and to attain its maturity. those political quacks are endeavoring in the swaddling cloths and tinsel of Monarchism of Europe. The madmen throw their sceptre to the tide, in hope of making its waves!

While all around us, colonies founded by our fathers, and for a long time its inferior respect, have since outstripped her, and nations, and are now numbered among the Nations, those narrow-sighted men, with heads and small hearts, tie their country in torpor and inaction. All its efforts spent to counteract and neutralize the empiricism: in the meantime, every guish, perishes; elementary instruction, professional; education, social and which a good system of local municipalities and of decentralized administration could develop; the clearing and the better use of land; manufactures and industry; commerce; the accumulation of wealth and more. At present but one class seems to profit of the high functionaries and of the public who handle the public works and public He who does not advance, will fall back, in which all proceeds so quickly; especially this continent. Can this state of things be thought it to continue? It is for you, Electors, to give the answer.

You have one day in four years, your sovereign voice can be heard. You have now come. Let the great voice of the people thunder, let its breath drive away the men of narrow and retrograde views of the history of old Europe to find the young Canada; and who seek to impose a society perfectly democratic.

UIS JOSEPH PAPINEAU'S S TO THE ELECTORS OF THE IF MONTREAL.

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tem, in depriving the Executive Council of its
patronage, and its consequent corrupt means
of influencing its employes and public opi-
nion. Municipal Corporations would also have
within the limits of their attributions, nume-
rous administrative and legislative local duties,
which now embarrass an honest Executive, while
they enable a dishonest Executive to interfere in
a thousand ways in the affairs of localities, to
barter their interests.

Put the House of Assembly above the influ-
ence of corruption, and, on the other hand, render
the Ministers really responsible to the House, by
enacting a law forbidding the acceptance of any
office under the Crown, by the representatives of
the people, pending the exercise of their mandate,
and for one year after its expiration, unless
the appointment is ratified by re-election.—
The scandalous traffic in parliamentary con-
sciences during these latter years, by the distri-
bution of public offices among the representatives
of the people, eloquently pleads in favour of the
passage of a law, by which it might be stopped.

Extension of the Suffrage. The want of
this extension is above all things felt in our
towns, where many honest artisans and heads of
families, householders and respectable citizens,
are deprived of their right of voting at elections,
because they pay a few dollars less rent than
their neighbors. It is a fact that a very large
portion of our citizens are thus disfranchised in
our towns and cities—this ought not to be.

It often happens also that the peaceable elec-
tor, who desires to perform one of the most valu-
able and holy rights of a citizen, that of declaring
at the poll the candidate of his choice, cannot do
so without being insulted, intimidated and as-
saulted by scoundrels hired and paid to violate
the electoral franchise by the candidates of the
minority, desirous of being returned by brute
force. There is a simple and efficacious remedy
for this disgrace of our elections. It is the vote
by ballot. Every six months, throughout the
vast extent of the United States, thousands of
polling places are opened, and millions of elec-
tors resort to them, for the purpose of deposit-
ing the sealed tickets containing the names
of the candidates of their choice, and never
do we hear of riots, or mobs, or of any citi-
zens being maltreated, with very rare exceptions,
at long intervals, and that only in those districts
of large sea-ports, inhabited by the most lawless
and worthless of the community.

These are grand reforms, of the greatest
importance, and the influence of which, if effect-
ed, would be most beneficially, immediately felt
throughout our country. There are still others,
such as a good system of elementary instruction,

both in good and evil fortune. They say that this refusal would be interpreted as a censure—a disavowal of the noble efforts, which are being made in Montreal and throughout the Province, for the largest possible renovation of the representation, of which the majority in the last Parliament forfeited their duty and their engagements taken at the Hustings. The Manifesto of the Committee of Reform and Progress, published at Quebec, was the professed political symbol—the wisely and moderately liberal flag displayed by every candidate chosen by constituencies where popular and democratic influence prevailed. Four years ago, there was not one of your candidates who would have dared to refuse his approbation to the doctrines enunciated in that able document; but candidates, transformed into ministers by the importance which you lent them, have quickly thrown that declaration to the four winds, and the crowd of parasites who swarm at their feet, did not find in it one iota, which they thought proper to vote in Parliament, after having proclaimed it and sworn to it at the hustings, as the programme of their future legislative labors.

Under these circumstances, considering the situation of the country and of the party, and from whom this appeal comes, I cannot give an absolute refusal. I leave it to the Electors of Montreal to dispose of me. If they judge that I may still be of some use in their service and that of my country, I shall employ, as heretofore, all my efforts for the progress and development, moral and material, of a land so richly endowed by nature, but so much behind the age in consequence of the defects of many of her social and political institutions; but still such as she is dear to all her citizens, native or adoptive. If, on the other hand, the majority of electors refuse me their suffrages, I shall remain satisfied in my retreat. I shall have quitted public life without disgrace or regret; without hatred or rancour; happy in the remembrance of my labors of forty years in a good cause—the good cause of the Democracy—happy in the certainty of its speedy and certain triumph throughout the extent of our American World. Yes! our country, then consoled and prosperous, will one day be Republican, and that day you will see—you, the youth of Canada! though I and the other old athletes may have descended to the tomb before the advent of that great and glorious day!

The citizens of Montreal like those of Canada in general, are of divers origins—Celts, Franks, Anglo-Saxons; some born here, many come from afar to make it their adoptive country; all sincerely desiring its prosperity; all having here their hearts, their families, and their interests. All of them, a little earlier or a little later, came from France or from the British Isles, to seek in America, for them and for their children, life, liberty and happiness. No one commits the absurdity of quitting Europe to seek here distinctions, institutions or privileges of aristocracies. All know before setting out (or learn at once on arriving) that there is not in the world any society better adapted for liberty and equality than that of Canada, where there are neither oligarchs with excessive fortunes and still more excessive pride and pretension; nor paupers obliged to crawl through their lives, often decimated by hunger, pestilence, and war. All the world

in which all proceeds so quickly; in this continent. Can this state of things be allowed to continue? It is for you, give the answer.

You have one day in four years your sovereign voice can be heard. You have now come. Let the great people thunder, let its breath drive away the men of narrow and retrograde views the history of old Europe to find the young Canada; and who seek to impose on society perfectly democratic, the semblance, the budgets, the patronage and the corruption, the capricious and arbitrary power, of a monarchical system. Especially let it drive away those of your chiefs in the road to reform who denied their and your principle day when Lord Sydenham put in the fundamental axiom of the political system by his predecessor Lord Durham THE CHIEFS OF CANADIAN DEMOCRACIES, AND LUCRATIVE PLACES, AND THE GOVERNMENT WILL CEASE TO EXIST, THE PEOPLE WILL BE NOTHING." We all shuddered with indignation when Lord Durham threw this insult. Alas! that we should have to blush, when our heads to day, when this audacious system has been realized with so many of your defenders!

Free, enlightened and progressive people, proclaim the maxim:—WE WISH HERE PERFECT ACCORD AND HARMONY BETWEEN THE CIVIL STATE AND OUR POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS. Let us enjoy this harmony, which, without violence, would cause to disappear the defects of our actual condition, and the elements of our trouble, which now retard the development of our country in every respect. Let us, above all other things, to have the best legislation:—

The extension of the elective system to the Legislative Council and to the Executive Council can be applied. The people can judge directly of the choice of its servants: the Peace, Officers of Militia, and the Judges. We can do it by the intervention of the Council, whose patronage is a source of corruption, very extensive and dangerous, which threatens the independence of opinion.

The establishment, on a firm and permanent basis, of a Municipal system, organized, which shall not be subject to continual changes, and which, acceptable and understood by them, would become the most valued of their institutions, the safeguard of all their liberties. The Municipality which makes the power of the democracy in England and the United States, and despotism never triumphed on the Continent till it had destroyed the Municipality. The municipality, it is the political life of the people, it is the temple of their liberties, the citadel of their rights. Without the Municipality, democracy can never be long-lived. We cannot too strongly insist upon its importance, immediate and perpetual.

The foundation of municipalities, the decentralization of the Administrative system, and even the Legislative Power, by giving privileges to the people, it, in time, removes the radical vice of our

which all proceeds so quickly; especially on this continent. Can this state of things last, ought it to continue? It is for you, Electors, to give the answer.

You have one day in four years, on which our sovereign voice can be heard. To this day you have now come. Let the great voice of the people thunder, let its breath drive away all those men of narrow and retrograde views who look in the history of old Europe to find the future of young Canada; and who seek to impose upon a society perfectly democratic, the forms, the semblance, the budgets, the taxes, the patronage and the corruption, the centralisation and arbitrary power, of a monarchical government. specially let it drive away those men, so long our chiefs in the road to reform and progress, who denied their and your principles from the day when Lord Sydenham put in practice that fundamental axiom of the political system invented by his predecessor Lord Durham:—"BUY UP THE CHIEFS OF CANADIAN DEMOCRACY WITH HONOURS, AND LUCRATIVE PLACES, AND THE DEMOCRACY WILL CEASE TO EXIST, THE PEOPLE WILL THEN DO NOTHING." We all shuddered with indignation, when Lord Durham threw this insult in our faces, alas! that we should have to blush, and bow low our heads to day, when this audacious prophecy has been realized with so many of your old dependers!

Free, enlightened and progressive Electors! proclaim the maxim:—WE WISH HEREAFTER, FOR A PERFECT ACCORD AND HARMONY BETWEEN OUR SOCIAL STATE AND OUR POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS. To enjoy this harmony, which, without jar or violence, would cause to disappear the anomalies of our actual condition, and the elements of dissension and trouble, which now retard the advancement of our country in every respect, it is necessary, above all other things, to have the following legislation:—

The extension of the elective principle to the Legislative Council and wherever it can be applied. The people can just as well judge directly of the choice of its servants—Justices of the Peace, Officers of Militia, &c.—as they can do it by the intervention of the Executive Council, whose patronage is a source of corruption, very extensive and dangerous, and an evil which threatens the independence of public opinion.

The establishment, on a firm and permanent basis, of a Municipal system perfectly organized, which shall not be subject to continual changes, and which, acceptable to the people and understood by them, would speedily become the most valued of their institutions, and the safeguard of all their liberties. It is the municipality which makes the power and glory of the democracy in England and the United States, and despotism never triumphed on the European continent till it had destroyed the municipality. The municipality, it is the political school of the people, it is the temple of their liberty, it is the citadel of their rights. Without the municipality, democracy can never be long maintained. We cannot too strongly insist upon its establishment, immediate and perpetual.

The foundation of municipalities implies the decentralization of the Administrative, the Judicial and even the Legislative Power. In giving privileges to the people, it, at the same time, removes the radical vice of our present sys-

tem of the candidates of their choice, and never do we hear of riots, or mobs, or of any citizens being maltreated, with very rare exceptions, at long intervals, and that only in those districts of large sea-ports, inhabited by the most lawless and worthless of the community.

These are grand reforms, of the greatest importance, and the influence of which, if effected, would be most beneficently, immediately felt throughout our country. There are still others, such as a good system of elementary instruction, agricultural schools, the codification of the laws, the free navigation of the St. Lawrence, and, above all, the most strict economy in the public expenditure, which demand prompt and energetic action on the part of the Legislature.

There is a question which, at the present time, greatly agitates public opinion. It is not surprising that the population of a Province, already burdened with so considerable an amount of debt, such as ours, should manifest the greatest emotion and anxiety when it sees a Parliament about expiring, about to restore its mandate to the people whose confidence it had forfeited, daring, in the name of that people which it no longer represents, to contract new pecuniary engagements by which their debt will be doubled, and leaving it as a fatal legacy to generations yet to come. The friends of progress, are desirous of advancing the interests of industry and commerce as well as ameliorating our political institutions, and as men *truly practical*, they rejoice to see the numerous railroad enterprises now commenced, and which will soon traverse our beautiful country in all directions; because these various lines of road will bind together the distant sections of our own territory, and tend to make of this Province the highway of communication and transport between the sea-ports on the Atlantic and our own vast Lakes of the interior, and the new States which are being formed so rapidly in the rich valley of the Mississippi. They know that the Portland, Quebec and Richmond, Champlain, Lachine and Plattsburgh, Western, Huron and Simcoe, Prescott and Bytown, and Bytown and Montreal railroads, will be profitable to their stockholders and an immense benefit to the settler, to the farmer, and to the merchant. They are impatient to see the link between Montreal and Toronto completed. But they do not wish—on the contrary, they protest against and repudiate the folly or the treachery of the ministry, who wish to make us construct at the expense of Canada, for the military purposes of England, a railway from Halifax, which at the lowest computation will cost \$18,000,000 and of which the receipts afterwards will not suffice to meet the working expenses: This is a monstrosity of which the late ministry became guilty, and of which the new ministry appears willing to take, in turn, the responsibility. It is for you, electors, again to decide, if you will permit this injury to your interests.

I conclude, fellow citizens. Let the electors of Canada do their duty at this critical and decisive period, and our country will return to its natural course, to its normal condition, its democracy will attain gradually, peaceably, its legitimate development; and it will soon become the equal in happiness prosperity and contentment of the neighbouring fortunate republics.

L. J. PAPINEAU.

Petite Nation, 24th November, 1851.

POTTS, PRINTER, HERALD OFFICE, MONTREAL.

